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DAILY SUMMARY

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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DAILY SUMMARY

25 November 1963

This summary of significant information has not been coordinated outside the Office of Current Intelligence. It does not represent a complete coverage of all current reports received, nor does time permit the complete evaluation of all reports which are included.

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OTHER CUBAN REACTIONS TO THE ASSASSINATION - cont'd

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The Cuban (Foreign Ministry) instructed a number of Cuban (diplomatic missions abroad) on 22 November not to make "any statements." 24 (Page 3)

Che Guevara, in a 24 November speech, warned Cubans that "everything indicates that in the next months and years world peace will be threatened" as never before. (Page 3)

CUBAN SUPPORT FOR EXTERNAL SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES:

The Venezuelan Government plans to hold a press conference on 26 November revealing the Cuban origin of the arms cache found in Venezuela early this month. (Page 3)

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FIDEL CASTRO'S SPEECH:

Fidel Castro's two-hour speech on 23 November was what he termed an "objective analysis" of the implications of President Kennedy's assassination. The speech reflected an apprehension that US policy toward him may now become even tougher. He said the President's death was "serious and bad news" which could lead from "a bad situation to a worse situation." He pointed out that President Kennedy's alleged promise not to invade Cuba had been strongly attacked by those "ultrareactionaries" in the United States who, he said, are now using the assassination to create a climate of "anti-Soviet, anti-Cuban hysteria" designed to pressure the new President toward a Cuban policy "highly prejudicial to the interests of peace and of mankind."

Castro began his speech by stating that he "and the immense majority of human beings" react with "repudiation" to the assassination, which is not "a correct method of struggle." While the death of the imperialist system would make Cubans happy, "the death of a man, even if that man were our enemy, cannot make us happy...we must not confuse the systems with the men." He said,"we always cease our belligerency at death; we always bow with respect at death, even if it has to do with an enemy."

Castro declared that the assassination can only benefit "those ultrarightist and ultrareactionary sectors, among which President Kennedy could not be counted." These "most reactionary forces are now breaking loose within the United States," he declared. President Kennedy was a strong president who was able to control these pressures, but the new US president, because of the circumstances inherent in his assumption of the presidency, will not have the same strength and authority, Castro said.

Castro then read a series of US news dispatches referring to the Castro-Communist affiliations of the accused assassin. He said this was all part of the "reactionary" effort to create a climate of "anti-Soviet, anti-Cuban hysteria" in the United States. This climate of hysteria, he said, is designed to face the new President with an irresistible pressure toward a "more aggressive policy."

Castro then devoted considerable time in an attempt to throw doubt on the guilt of the accused assassin and to insinuate that Oswald, whether guilty or innocent, was actually a tool of the extreme rightists. "Is he really guilty? Is he a scapegoat? Is he a psychopath? Or is he perhaps a tool of the most reactionary US circles? Who is this man?

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FIDEL CASTRO'S SPEECH - cont'd

Why did he go into action precisely when circumstances were least favorable for a left-wing fanatic to assassinate the US President?" Castro stated that his investigation of the "reports, statements, and publicity" on the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in the United States failed to indicate that there was any chapter in Dallas or New Orleans and that "we never in our life heard of him (Oswald)." Castro then referred to US press reports on Oswald's attempt last summer to "infiltrate" the anti-Castro Student Revolutionary Directorate in the US and to DRE statements that Oswald was thought at that time to be "an agent of the FBI or the CIA." "They (the DRE leaders) must know, because they have many dealings with them, what FBI and CIA agents look like," Castro stated.

Castro then declared that, while Oswald may or may not be guilty, it is nevertheless possible that he was "an agent for the CIA or the FBI, as those people suspected" and could have been "a tool of the most reactionary sectors which may have been hatching a sinister plan, which may have plotted the assassination of Kennedy because they disagreed with his international policy." "What is behind all this? What sinister maneuver are they hatching behind all this? Who can be responsible for the assassination of President Kennedy? And who benefits from the assassination...except the worst reactionaries?" Castro warned that it is not possible at this point to answer these questions, "but we do say that it is suspect, that we must be cautious and vigilant and alert." Castro closed with the usual expressions of confidence that the Cubans will be ready to meet any new crisis with resolution. (CIA FBIS 06, 24 November, OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS:

The Cuban defensive military alert, ordered immediately after the news of President Kennedy's death, remains in effect, but no unusual Cuban military activity has been noted. (NSA, various internal military intercepts, 22-24 November, SECRET KIMBO)

OTHER CUBAN REACTIONS TO THE ASSASSINATION:

A clandestine source reports that the chargé of the Cuban Embassy in Santiago de Chile said that there is no doubt that the CIA or "other Yankees" assassinated the President and that, as a result, a third world war will start. He also emphasized the need for Cuba to prepare for a possible US invasion. (CIA Santiago de Chile, TDCS 3/565,826, 23 November, SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

OTHER CUBAN REACTIONS TO THE ASSASSINATION - cont'd

Carlos Lechuga, Cuban UN ambassador, issued a statement early on 23 November stating: "Despite the antagonisms existing between the Government of the United States and the Cuban Revolution, we have received with profound displeasure the news of the tragic death of President Kennedy. All civilized men are always saddened by happenings such as this. Our delegation before the United Nations desires to express that this is the sentiment of the people and the Government of Cuba." (UPI New York, 23 November, UNCLASSIFIED)

Cuban Foreign Minister Roa dispatched a message to Carlos Lechuga shortly after President Kennedy's assassination asking Lechuga to "please send me at once all the data that you have on Lyndon B. Johnson including his political connections, etc." Lechuga replied immediately: "biographical data on Lyndon Johnson are in cable (24) of Prensa Latina and in UPI dispatch 169 and supplements." He also referred Roa to "Who is Who" which he had sent the Foreign Ministry earlier and said he will cable additional information later. (NSA 3/O/CUD/T1382-63 and -T1381-63, 23 November, TOP SECRET DINAR)

The Cuban Foreign Ministry dispatched a circular message late on 22 November to a number of Cuban diplomatic missions abroad stating only "do not make any statements." This was probably an attempt to prevent any comments on President Kennedy's assassination until the official Cuban line could be established. (NSA 3/O/CUD/T1380-63, 23 November, TOP SECRET DINAR)

Che Guevara, in a speech on 24 November, expressed apprehensions similar to those stated by Fidel Castro the night before. Guevara blamed President Kennedy's assassination and the killing of Oswald on reactionary forces in the United States and warned Cubans that a new, tougher policy against Cuba will be forthcoming from the United States. "Everything indicates that in the next months and years world peace will be threatened by the most unscrupulous, ferocious, and warlike monopolistic oligarchy--and with the most murderous potential --that the history of humanity has every known," Guevara said. (CIA FBIS, 25 November, OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

CUBAN SUPPORT OF EXTERNAL SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES:

A Venezuelan Government press conference tying the arms cache found in Venezuela earlier this month to Cuba is scheduled for Tuesday, 26 November, according to the US Embassy in Caracas. This is to be followed by a report to the OAS, probably on 2 December. (Am Emb Caracas 601, 24 November, CONFIDENTIAL)